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February 25, 2014

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Supervisors Move Closer to Sheriff's Oversight Commission

Moving a step closer to bringing accountability to the Sheriff's Department, the Board of Supervisors has asked the new Inspector General Max Huntsman and Interim Sheriff John Scott to come up with a plan for how a citizen's oversight commission would work. The motion to prepare a plan was approved Tuesday and will be presented to the board by the end of June.

The motion, authored by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, comes after ongoing investigations into the Sheriff's Department use of force in county jails, including a criminal investigation by the United States Department of Justice, the indictment of 20 deputies and a civil investigation. A permanent citizen's oversight commission would serve as a means of checks and balances for the Sheriff's Department.

"The Sheriff's Department cannot police itself," said Ridley-Thomas. "We need a permanent, public watchdog that will ensure inmates' rights are not being violated. While most of our deputies patrol our communities admirably, the culture of violence that exists in our jails simply cannot continue."

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